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JOINT UN/UNESCO SEMINAR ON URBANIZATION IN THE ECAFE REGION

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SUMMARY REPORT

Item 1. Urbanization in Asia and the Far East - Situation and trends: Definition and classification of the concepts and problems or urbanization.

The General Rapporteur, Mr. Philip M. Hauser, presented a brief statement designed as an introduction to the Seminar on Urbanization in its economic and social aspects as background for consideration of problems of urbanization in the ECAFE region.

The city or urban agglomeration was pointed out as a relatively recent phenomenon. Chronologically speaking, man has inhabited the earth for some half million to one million years. But even villages or towns did not exist until after the neolithic revolution. It was only some 8 to 10,000 years ago that separate permanent settlements became important forms of human habitation. Both the city and problems of urbanization, then, are relatively new problems with which man has been

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only recently confronted; and which have emerged because of man's activities in transforming the world in which he lives.

The word "city" is generally identified as both antecedent and consequent of modern western civilization. Actually more people live in large cities in Asia than in Europe and North America. In 1950, out of an estimated total of 886 cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants, Asia had 289, Euripe 261, and North America 116. The cities with 100,000 or more throughout the world contained an estimated 314 million inhabitants. Of these 106 million, about two-thirds lived in Asia, 83 million or about one-fourth lived in Europe, and 48 million or about one-seventh lived in North America.

It is possible at least approximately to measure the growth of cities on global basis since 1800. Since that date, while the population of the world has increased 2½ times, the population resident in cities of 5 thousand or more persons has multiplied about 30 times; the population resident in cities of 100 thousand or more has increased about twentyfold. For the world as a whole, the rate of increase in population in cities of 100,000 was by 76 per cent between 1800 and 1900; 222 per cent between 1850 and 1900; 254 per cent between 1900 and 1950. During the 19th century, the increase in large city population was more rapid in Europe and in North America than in Asia. During the first half of this century, however, the increase in large city population has been much more rapid in Asia than in Europe or North America. It is the great increase in Asian large city population, a 450 per cent increase during the first half of this century, that has maintained the rapid increase of the world urban population. City population in Europe and in North America has not been increasing as rapidly as in Asia during this century because the population of the more economically developed areas had already become largely urbanized.

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It was proposed to use the term "urbanization" in accordance with Professor Kingsley Davis' usage to refer to the proportion of the population of an area which lives in cities.

Although Asia has more large cities and more people living in them than Europe or North America, Asia is less urbanized than any of the continents other than Africa. ~~In 1950~~, about 13 per cent of Asia's population lived in cities of 20,000 or more inhabitants, as compared with 9 per cent in Africa. In contrast, 35 per cent of the population in Europe (excluding the USSR) and 42 per cent of the population in North America (North of the Rio Grande) lived in cities of this size. In Oceania, 47 per cent of the population was urbanized by this criterion. The percentage of other world areas urbanized were as follows: USSR, 31 per cent; South America, 26; Central America and the Caribean, 21 per cent.

The city as a form of economic and social organization is related to the level of technology and economic development. The size and character of population agglomerations, small or large, ranging from villages and towns to cities and metropolitan areas are functions of the economic and social organization of a society, including both agricultural and non-agricultural productivity; the extent of the division of labour, including territorial specialization; transport and communication; and the political and social structure.

Prior to about 3,000 B.C., most population agglomerations were relatively small and are, perhaps, appropriately designated as villages or towns. Agglomerations large enough to merit the term "city" probably did not appear until after this date. Cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants certainly did not exist prior to the Greco-Roman period. The metropolis of a million or more persons appeared only after the industrial revolution.

Gras, in his account of economic history, has perhaps the most comprehensive treatment of the relationship between economic development and settlement or habitation patterns. Using historical materials on ways of making a living and technology on the one hand, and forms of human settlement or community on the other hand, Gras has related the two in a classification

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which intertwines both. In his account of the historical development of civilization, 5 stages or periods are differentiated as follows: (1) collectional economy, (2) cultural nomadic economy, (3) the settled village economy, (4) the town economy and (5) the metropolitan economy.

In many of the ECAFE countries, all of these forms of economic organization and human settlement co-exist. Lampard, following Childe's classification, distinguishes 3 phases of city development which are perhaps more relevant to the contemporary scene. These are the pre-industrial, industrial and metropolitan urban agglomerations. The pre-industrial cities, which in the Western world existed up to about 19th century, are best described perhaps as a loose-knit system of food economies with some inter-regional commerce but no marked territorial division of labour. The industrial city was a product of the industrial revolution emerging during the 19th century. It was characterized by marked territorial division of labour, and centripetal development generated by steam power and belt and pulley technology. Metropolitan urban centres were products of 20th century technology. The centripetal force of the steam engine gave way to the centrifugal force of electric power, the automobile and telephone. Morever, differentiation of function and territorial division of labour were intensified; large proportions of the population were drawn to urban centres; but, within the urban centre, population became increasingly decentralized as a result of the impact of a combination of centrifugal forces.

The development of the cities in the West resulted largely from the market mechanism. There was no or little central planning. The play of the market determined the division of labour, territorial specialization, the allocation of resources, the spatial pattern of cities, and ecological interdependence. It is important to stress this fact because it was not necessary for the Western world to understand to matrix of factors which accounted for either economic development or urbanization. The market mechanism operated to produce both economic development and the urbanization of the West without the need for statesmen, businessmen or scholars to understand either the process or the results. It is important to understand this fact because in the ECAFE region in which economic development necessarily involves a large amount of central planning, it is necessary to have such knowledge as a basis for determination of policy and its implementation. In fact, the need for knowledge about the relationship between economic development, industrialization, and urbanization constitutes a major justification for this Seminar.

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The development of large cities and urbanization briefly described above in over-simplified terms had important social consequences. Changes in technology and economic organization produced great changes in the cultural aspects of Western social institutions including the family, in value systems, and in personal forms of thought and conduct. The sociological and anthropological literature makes clear the nature of these changes. Tonnies differentiation of "community" and "society" has called attention to the dual aspect of human agglomerations. The "community" aspect refers to the inter-dependence created by the mechanism of competition which produces the spatial and economic base of the human group. The "society" aspect refers to the organization which is achieved through communication through the emergence of consensus and a common culture.[1/]

The process of competition is impersonal , unconscious, utilitarian and involves no social contact. The process of communication is a process of social interaction. It is personal, conscious, necessitates social contact and invokes sympathy, reciprocity, appreciation and sentiment.

The pre-industrial agglomeration is in a larger measure "society" rather than "community". The city is in a larger measure "community" than "society". This distinction provides an important insight into the impact of the city on human modes of thought and contact.

"Urbanism as a way of life" has perhaps best been described by the late Prof. Lewis Wirth. In his classic article under this title, Wirth has indicated the way in which such abstract aspects of the city as size, density and heterogeneity of population have influenced the nature, frequency and intensity of social contact, and therefore the nature of personal development and of human nature itself. In the urban environment, the nature of man has been changed by changes in the mechanism and process of social interaction,

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1/ These concepts are presented as in American usage. The terms "community" and "society" are used in reverse of the literal translation of Tonnies, "Gemainschaft" and "Gesellschaft"

as well as by changes in the culture and social heritage. The "city mentality" described by Park has been characterized by sophistication, objectivity, utilitarianism and rationalism and is, on the one hand, the product of the urban environment and, on the other hand, a major force producing and influencing changes in the social heritage, in economic, social and political institutions and in the urban environment itself.

It is within this framework that the changes in social institutions, including the family and the church, in the social structure, and in value systems, can be understood. In the process of social change produced by the emergence of the city, social and personal disorganisation are significant by-products. Social disorganization is a stage in the process of social change. It is an intermediate stage between social organization and social reorganization. Personal disorganization is viewed by the sociologist as the subjective aspect of social disorganisation. The many personal problems in the city - delinquency, crime, poverty, unemployment, immorality, alcoholism, suicide, neurosis are symptoms of social change manifest in the person. The understanding of problems of social and personal disorganization is an important pre-requisite to the determination of policy and administrative action designed to eliminate or to ameliorate these problems.

The emergence of large cities has also created many physical problems - problems of land use and circulation. The slum, poor housing, and congestion are perhaps the most acute of the physical problems associated with urbanization which call for attention.

In the materials set forth above, an effort has been made briefly to summarize the experience in respect of urbanization of the more economically developed areas in the West. Many of these materials can be quite helpful to countries in the ECAFE region which are attempting economic development through industrialization. Success in industrialization is likely to increase the urbanization of the population. It is not possible, however, to assume that the experience of the West is a safe basis for anticipating problems of urbanization in ECAFE countries.

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There are many reasons to assume that urbanization in Asia may involve quite different patterns of development and inter-relationships with economic development than those observed in the West. These reasons include differences between the situation at the present time, when Asia is attempting to accelerate economic development and especially industrialization, and the situation one or two centuries ago when the European and American nations experienced the industrial revolution.

Among these differences are: basic differences arising from the fact that present urban development in Asia is largely an outgrowth of a century or more of colonialism, and in large measure, reflects the troubled conditions of post-war adjustment and newly won independence; differences in the extent to which central planning and government interventionism, as contrasted with the free market economy, may be expected to operate in Asian economic development; differences in the state of industrial and agricultural technology in the 20th, as contrasted with the 18th and 19th centuries; differences in the ratio of population to resources and the availability of open lands for surplus population emigration; differences in basic outlook and value systems between Asia and the West; and significant differences in the total world situation - economic, social and political, at the present time as contrasted with the 18th and 19th centuries.

Despite the fact that there are apt to be many differences in the patterns of Asian urbanization, as contrasted with those that occurred in the West, the Western experience nevertheless provides some basis for Asian nations to anticipate many social and personal problems arising from the urban environment. It may be anticipated, for example, that the urban environment in Asia as in the West will produce cultural changes which will be reflected in changes in personal thought and conduct. The large family system has already undergone changes in Asian cities. As the process of urbanism continues and Asian cities take on more of the characteristics of Western cities in respect of heterogeneity, frequency and intensity of social contact, changes may be expected in value systems, in religious practices and beliefs, in personal relationships, in social stratification including classes and castes,

/in consumption

in consumption patterns, in education etc. As a by-product of these and many other social changes, it may also be anticipated there will be many social frictions evident in forms of social and personal disorganization. It may be anticipated that in the vortex of social change there will be an increased tendency towards juvenile delinquency and crime, family disorganization, vice, alcoholism, suicide and neurosis. Moreover, it may be anticipated that there will be many physical problems, perhaps compounding the present heritage of congestion, poor housing, slum conditions, traffic problems, problems of providing for adequate facilities for sanitation, recreation and education. There will also be, of course, the even more basic problem of providing for adequate economic development and productivity, so as to enable increasing urban populations to attain higher levels of living and to eliminate the basic problem that confronts most Asian cities today, namely, mass poverty.

The transition of agricultural Asian nations to greater degrees of urbanization will inevitably produce many problems of the type enumerated above. But it must be emphasized that the total impact of the city is far from a negative one. After all, it is the city which has paved the way for the great achievements of Western civilization in technology, in productivity and in levels of living, on the one hand; and, also, in the arts and sciences, in the growth of universities, the development of the sciences, the creation of new art forms and, in general, in the great intellectual, scientific and aesthetic aspects of Western civilization.

Needless to say, the city may be expected to play a similar role in the further development of Asian culture. It is not to be expected that this development will necessarily take the same forms as in the West. What may be anticipated will be further development of the basic elements in present indigenous Asian, intellectual, philosophical and esthetic cultural tracts, in addition to technological and scientific developments.

The introductory statement was followed by general discussion in which participants from the various countries represented at the Seminar presented materials relating to their respective countries. These materials are in the main set forth in the individual country reports. In summary, however, the discussion brought forth the following conclusions:

1. Countries in Asian are in the main over-urbanized in relation to their present state of economic development.

At the present time, there is a larger urban population in most Asian nations than is justified by present levels of agricultural and non-agricultural productivity. The urban populations of Asia have not grown in response to economic need for large urban population concentrations, i.e., from "pull" factors represented by industrial, commercial and service developments, but rather from "push" factors such as those indicated below.

2. Most Asian nations are characterized by the presence of a "primate" or great city many times, some 5 to 10 times the size of the second city, in contrast with the situation in the West which is characterized by "systems" of cities.

The great city is the product in the main of economic development oriented essentially to one or more external economies, rather than the result of indigenous economic development. For most Asian cities, this external orientation was a product of colonialism which produced the great city as a link between the colony and the mother country. In some cases, the great city has the same character serving as a link between the local elite and the outside world, rather than being an economic outgrowth of the indigenous national economy.

3. The growth of cities in Asia including that of the primate or great cities was the result of the following types of factors:

(a) The low land-population ratio arising from rapid population growth in relation to agricultural resources. People left rural areas, in brief, because there was no way of procuring a livelihood on already over-populated land.

(b) The disruption and disorganisation produced by the last war, and bitter struggles in some countries for independence. Many of the cities of Asia are choked with refugees who have swelled urban population out of proportion to their economic development.

(c) The lure of urban existence to which large parts of the peasant population was exposed as the result of military service as well as migratory refugee flows.

(d) The actual exhaustion of natural resources in some areas which deprived some locales of their economic base.

(e) Seasonality of employment in agriculture which creates migratory flows exposing many people to the attraction of city life.

/4. The primate

4. The primate or great city may have a paralytic effect on the development of other urban places and tends to be parasitic in relation to the remainder of the national economy. The fact that the great cities already exist, creates the tendency further to centralize industrial, commercial and service developments in them. Such a tendency may detract from the growth potential of other cities and may produce further concentration in the great city at the expense of the rest of the national economy.

5. Asian cities, in contrast with the Western cities, often tend to be an agglomeration of villages.

The Asian city in general tends to be characterized by the co-existence of two distinctive sub-areas: (i) the Western type area, and (ii) the "native" area consisting of an agglomeration of villages. In consequence, although a rather small elite indigenous population appears in Asian cities with the same characteristic as these possessed by urban residents in the West, the mass population of the Asian cities resident in the village agglomerations tend to retain "folk" characteristics. The characteristics of the urban resident, identified with such dichotomies or continued as the "folk-urban","rural-urban" or "community-society" categories, do not hold for the mass of residents of Asian cities. In respect of this conceptual framework, the Asian city is in large measure not yet "urbanized".

6. The cities in Asia which are now in process of rapid growth, outdistancing the rate of economic development, are faced with many social and physical problems. The fundamental problem is that of low level of living, reflecting low national productivity. The symptoms of this malady are inadequate housing, the almost complete absence of sanitary facilities for the mass indigenous population, the presence of filth, squalor, repugnant odors, disease and high mortality. Moreover, the city populations of Asia are still characterized by mass illiteracy and have little or no access to educational, recreational or medical facilities.

/7. Asian

7. Asian nations are faced with the difficult choice of allocating their limited resources toward the elimination or amelioration of the problems outlined above or in investment in productive enterprises with a view towards long-run social gains. It would obviously be unsound disproportionately to use limited resources to eliminate present evils at the expense of failing to increase national productivity and thus dooming the population to continued low levels of living. On the other hand, it is difficult to resist the appeal for social investment represented by the dire needs of the mass population. Some investment of social capital may, in fact, be regarded as essential to increased productivity. For example investments in education and certain minimum standards of sanitation and housing may be pre-requisites to increasing labour productivity.

8. Most Asian nations are acutely aware of their present and impending urban problems and many have specific agencies organized to study and to deal with them. Planning agencies, welfare agencies, health agencies, insurance schemes, social legislation and other devices are being employed in an effort to ameliorate the more difficult problems.

9. Efforts are being made by some Asian nations to decelerate the rate of urbanization or even to induce swelled urban population to return to rural areas. Programmes designed to achieve these objectives include (a) efforts to increase agricultural productivity, (b) efforts to make village life more attractive, (c) the stimulation of cottage industries, (d) the decentralization of new industrial development, (e) resettlement programmes including the opening of new agricultural lands, irrigation, etc. and (f) general national and regional planning.